REMARKS

Claims 1 to 50 remain in the case, of which claims 15,16 and 18 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 17 and 42 have been amended.

Reconsideration in view of the following remarks and entry of the foregoing amendments are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 5-14, 17, 19-24, 26-28, 30-49 have been rejected as being anticipated by COLLINS *et al.* under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as follows.

COLLINS discloses a corner member (124 or 128) connectable to profile members (17, 18, 20) by means of fasteners (not shown) being inserted perpendicularly with respect to the profiles. In contradistinction, claims 1 and 26 recite a corner key and profiles with longitudinal securing bores. Indeed, as explained in the background of the present invention, for example at paragraph 14, the Applicant submits that COLLINS discloses a technique of perpendicular fastener insertion that is similar to that of US Patent No. 6,067,720 (NOWELL). As explained in the background, perpendicular fastener insertion is particularly disadvantageous when using thermoplastic profiles because of the low tear resistance of such materials. In other words, the perpendicular fastening taught by COLLINS, particularly when using ductile materials, cannot achieve such reliable, tight joints as an assembly with longitudinal fastening.

Furthermore, COLLINS does not address another problem identified in the background of the present invention at paragraph 17, namely that of water and air leakage through the joints between the profiles and the corner keys.

In particular, COLLINS does not disclose a drainage and venting passage extending between the first and second inner corner faces. Indeed, COLLINS only discloses channels (142,166, 168) adapted to telescope into mating channels of the profile members (17, 18, 20). Nowhere does COLLINS disclose that these channels are used as drainage and venting channels. On the contrary, the corner members disclosed by

COLLINS have the same water and air leakage problems of the prior art identified in the background of the present invention.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 26 should be patentable and all dependent claims should be patentable at least for the same reasons as stated above.

Regarding claims 5 and 30, COLLINS does not teach an outer side corner face having a water evacuation and pressure equalization vent in communication with the drainage and venting passage of the corner key and the drainage and venting passage of each profile. On the contrary, the side face (150 or 172) of the corner members (124 or 128) are clearly not provided with any drainage and venting passage.

Regarding claims 11, 12, 21, 36, 37 and 46, which recite *inter alia* "a sealing element sealing the corner key", the Applicant submits that COLLINS does not teach using a sealing element for sealing the corner member (124 or 128). The sealing element is advantageous because it creates an intimate joint between lineal and corner key, resulting in an air-tight and watertight assembly, which is not the case for the assembly taught by COLLINS.

Regarding claims 17 and 42, in the case the corner key is made of thermoplastic material, it becomes clearly more advantageous to use profiles with a longitudinal securing bore as claimed and not profiles with perpendicular fastener insertion as disclosed in COLLINS because of the low tear resistance of such materials. Again, this problem was identified in the background of the present invention at paragraph 14. In this way, there is provided a superior structural load transfer through a mechanical assembly, from lineal profile to lineal profile via a corner key, as compared to COLLINS.

The rejections of the original claims are believed to have been overcome by the present remarks. From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order, and such an action is earnestly solicited.